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Good Practice Guidance - Children and Young People's Participation in Recruitment Processes.





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Introduction:

With many years of experience supporting children and young people in a wide range of recruitment and appointments, Jacqui from OHOV welcomes the opportunity to share the following good practice recommendations in relation to the full participation of children, young people and people with lived experience and hopes they will be of benefit for future processes.

Note: *Whilst these recommendations refer to “young people”, it should be taken to include people with experience as many of the recommendations are also applicable to children and adults.*

Planning and Preparation:

- 👤 Good participative practice requires an adequate amount of time to ensure the young person feels well prepared and confident in what is expected of them. The OHOV Team recommend a minimum of 4 weeks as a suitable lead in/preparation time for involving them in a recruitment process.
- 👤 To ensure an appropriate level of participation, you should involve young people and their supporting staff at **all stages of the process** - including the initial recruitment planning meetings, shortlisting, developing questions/activities, chairing panels, asking questions, scoring, feedback and making the final decision.
- 👤 Involvement in all stages enables the young person to build relationships with the Interview Panel, be fully involved, informed and clear about their role in the process, gain an understanding of the role being recruited, and ultimately have a decision making role in the appointment. They are also able to identify what support they might require to ensure that their needs are catered for to ensure their full participation.





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- 👤 If this is not possible then include a member of staff from the supporting project/Agency who can advise on what is required to include the person fully in the recruitment and interview processes.
- 👤 It is vitally important to consider issues of power and influence from the outset to ensure that young people can make an informed choice about their involvement, based on their ability to influence decision making.
- 👤 Ensure the young person has all the relevant paperwork – job/role description, person specification, background information.
- 👤 Ensure the young person has a clear understanding of their role in the process, the level of influence they will have in the decision making process and feels empowered to carry out the role that is expected of them.
- 👤 It is good practice to involve young people in the shortlisting process. This can be managed effectively with appropriate support to ensure they understand the role, the person specification and issues of confidentiality.

Practicalities and Logistics:

- 👤 Where a young person is travelling on their own (for any stage of the journey) tickets and clear information should be sent to them in advance. This is to minimise triggering any stress in turning up at the station and having a problem and possibly not having the financial, or other means to sort it out themselves.





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- 👤 You should routinely consider, and offer, accommodation if the young person is travelling a long way or will be required to attend a full day. Consideration should be given to the
- 👤 available budget for accommodation (especially during local festivals/industrial cities etc) due to lack of affordable/accessible accommodation.
- 👤 We recommend providing petty cash for young person/staff who are on official business as it's a heavy ask to expect staff (especially MA's/support staff on low salaries scales) to pay for any expenses related to business needs and then claim back via regular systems.
- 👤 Ensure young people basic needs are met (especially appropriate food and accommodation) and have assurances that all related costs will be picked up to enable them to feel confident to take part without worrying about having enough money to get breakfast, lunch, bus, train etc.
- 👤 Make sure the young person has the opportunity for some social interaction time with the panel over the lunch break and there is enough time to have a fresh air/cigarette break at this point in the day.
- 👤 Consider the timings of the day (this is especially relevant for senior level appointments where there might be intense processes involved and a lot of candidates making it a long day). However it is important to consider the needs of the young person/person to ensure they have enough breaks/down time to carry out their role effectively. They also most likely have some travel at the end of the day to get home.





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Interviews:

- 👤 Use positive language in candidates letters to ensure they understand the role of the young people involved in the day.
- 👤 Involving young people in the main panel interview can be a positive experience for both the adult panel and the young person.
- 👤 Ensure the young person has an active role in interview process i.e. chairing, asking the candidates questions which they have developed etc. This offers them opportunity for them to test out their intuitive impressions of candidates.
- 👤 To ensure valuable participation and transparency, the young person should be welcomed and involved throughout (including the summary discussions and decision making) to ensure they see/understand/experience/influence the full process.

We hope these recommendations offers a valuable contribution when considering methods to involve children, young people and people with lived experiences in the recruitment processes of staff/senior appointments.

Within her role as OHOV Project Lead, Jacqui is happy to discuss any of the recommendations included and is able to provide training in rights based participative methods of involving children and young people in decision making if this would be of interest.

